



## **ABSTRACT**

**NATO TRANSFORMATION: CONSOLIDATION IN AN ERA OF ENLARGEMENT** by LT COL Richard M. Perry, USAF, 49 pages.

The author will argue that a significant and perhaps greater threat to NATO exists internally in the guise of enlargement. Enlargement is good politically but harmful militarily if done too quickly. If NATO continues to enlarge at its current pace it will damage both its military capability and credibility as a collective defense mechanism. As NATO enlarges the disparity in military capability between new members and long standing members will dilute the overall effectiveness of the Alliance. One way to offset the adverse effects of enlargement is to transform NATO command and control structurally in order to absorb the shock of enlargement.

In order to support this assertion, the author focuses the debate by considering the strategic command of Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT) as a possible candidate for structural transformation in an effort to offset some of the costs of enlargement. The author proposes three transformation options. The first is to dissolve SACLANT completely. The second is to create a third strategic command responsible for NATO power projection. Finally, the third option is to downgrade SACLANT into an operational command responsible for concept and doctrine development, experimentation for Allied Command Europe (ACE), and forming teams with the expressed mission of "capabilities enhancement" in an effort to get some of the aspiring nations to NATO up to speed.

The author concludes that in some form and at some level NATO will have to transform its command and control in order to meet the military demands of enlargement. Option three, is therefore, the most attractive alternative, because it not only maintains the important symbolic link between the U.S. and Europe, but also offsets some of the adverse effects of enlargement.

# **NATO Transformation: Consolidation in an Era of Enlargement**

**A Monograph**

**by**

**Lt Colonel Richard M. Perry**

**United States Air Force**



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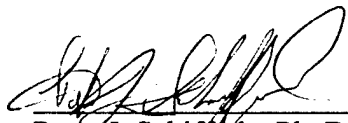
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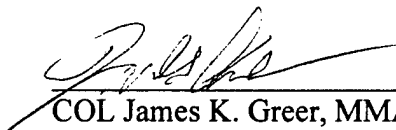
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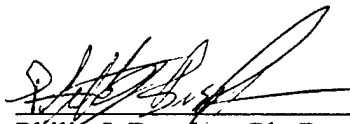
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One	
INTRODUCTION.....	PAGE 1
Chapter Two	
FRAMING THE DEBATE.....	PAGE 7
STRATEGY OF TRANSFORMATION.....	PAGE 8
STRATEGY OF ENLARGEMENT.....	PAGE 14
Chapter Three	
ALLIED COMMAND ATLANTIC: COLD WAR RELIC?.....	PAGE 21
THE ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE.....	PAGE 22
SACLANT: A U.S. PERSPECTIVE.....	PAGE 25
SACLANT: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE.....	PAGE 28
Chapter Four	
SACLANT TRANSFORMATION OPTIONS.....	PAGE 32
OPTION 1: DISSOLVING SACLANT.....	PAGE 34
OPTION 2: ADDITIONAL STRATEGIC COMMAND .....	PAGE 37
OPTION 3: A NEW FUNCTIONAL OPERATIONAL COMMAND.....	PAGE 39
Chapter Five	
CONCLUSION.....	PAGE 42
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	PAGE 47

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

On 19 September 2000, the Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces North Europe (CINCNORTH), a regional commander within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), sat at a table with Senator Joseph Biden (D-Del), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and debated the state of the Alliance. They discussed various options for NATO enlargement and the overall health of the transatlantic link between NATO's European members and the United States. They also talked about the continued decline of nations' defense budgets within NATO and the demand from politicians within those nations for a greater "peace dividend." The Senator and CINCNORTH both agreed that all of these issues were intertwined and that there were no easy solutions. However, Senator Biden was concerned. Given the inevitability of NATO enlargement, Senator Biden suggested that there was a growing consensus within the U.S. Congress that the European members of NATO ought to assume a greater role in burden sharing in areas perceived by the U.S. as being in Europe's own backyard. Senator Biden stipulated that the European members were overly committed politically to eastward enlargement without addressing their own military capability shortfalls either through meaningful transformation or procurement strategies. "The perception within the Congress," Senator Biden stated, "is that there remains an obvious disparity in military capability between the United States and European members illustrated most notably by Operation ALLIED FORCE in 1999 over Kosovo and the Former Republic of Yugoslavia." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting between Senator Joseph Biden (D-Del) and General Joachim Spiering (CINCNORTH) in Senator Biden's office located in the Hart Building, Washington D.C., 19 Sept 00. The author was assigned as the U.S. Military Assistant to CINCNORTH from July 1999 to July 2001. The discussion was recorded by the author and recounted using hand-notes.

Europe, CINCNORTH suggested, was fundamentally concerned about the political implications of enlargement without seriously being concerned about addressing real military shortfalls particularly in the areas of airlift and precision guided munitions. The prescription for meeting that shortfall required significant increases in European defense spending to close the military capability gap with the United States.

Furthermore, CINCNORTH said the views held by the U.S. Congress reflected a common perception within the military leadership of NATO from European member states as well; "we all know what the problem is, the problem is not that there's too little America in NATO, but too little Europe in NATO." The CINC asserted that increased military spending in focused areas highlighted by the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) in 1999 is only one part of the equation, the other is significant operational transformation of NATO's military command and control to meet the current threat environment.<sup>2</sup> "For example, we have three levels of military command in NATO, strategic commands, regional commands, and joint sub-regional commands...and the forces come from the nations...ALLIED FORCE was fought primarily by the United States at the tactical level, and controlled operationally by a NATO strategic command...the second and third levels of command within NATO either had marginal or no play at all...that's a broke system."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>The Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) was established at the Washington Summit in 1999 in an effort to improve the defense capabilities of the Alliance and to ensure the effectiveness of future multinational operations across the full spectrum of missions with a special focus on improving interoperability among Alliance forces. As Operation ALLIED FORCE clearly showed, there is a capability gap between the United States and the rest of the Alliance. The intent of DCI is to close the growing gap within the Alliance through a consolidated and focused approach addressing such broad operational areas as deployability, survivability, sustainability, and precision. To date, some 58 items are being addressed under the DCI rubric with some progress in a half-dozen sub-items.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 19 Sept 2000. NATO's Strategic Command (SC) or first level of command is the function of Allied Command Europe (ACE) headquartered at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium and Allied Command Atlantic (ACLANT) located in Norfolk, Virginia. The Regional Commands (RC) or second level of command within ACE are Allied Forces North Europe (AFNORTH) located in Brunssum, the Netherlands, and Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSOUTH) headquartered in Naples, Italy. RCs in ACLANT include East Atlantic (EASTLANT) in Northwood, United Kingdom; South Atlantic (SOUTHLANT) in Lisbon, Portugal and West Atlantic (WESTLANT) in Norfolk, Virginia. In addition, at the third or Joint Sub-Regional Command (JSRC) level there are seven JSRCs spread across ACE (see Figure 1).



The discussion held between Senator Biden and CINCNORTH was important for several reasons. First, it highlighted a number of complex inter-related issues concerning the future of NATO and the relationship between the U.S. and European members of NATO. Second, it underscored the influence of politics in NATO's decision making process. On this point, CINCNORTH asserted that there is far too little communication between strategic and operational level commanders within NATO and the broad political constituency they represent from 19 different nations. Additionally, this is not a point held simply by CINCNORTH. As Henry Kissinger contends in his book, *Does America Need A Foreign Policy?*, the purely military input to the political leadership representing 19 nations is often diluted by the inherent political and military bureaucracy evident within NATO itself in organizations like the North Atlantic Council (NAC) comprised of permanent representatives (ambassadors to NATO) and the Military Committee (MC) consisting of senior military leadership removed from the actual military chain-of-command but serving as an advisory group to the NAC.<sup>4</sup> Third, both Senator Biden and CINCNORTH agreed the United States *is* the de facto leader both economically and militarily within the Alliance and *does* contribute a disproportionate amount of both military kit and funding for, what one could argue, are *both* European and U.S. interests. The issue of burden sharing within the Alliance has fueled rhetoric on both sides of the Atlantic. For example, on the eve of the meeting of NATO's defense ministers in December 1999, the U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen delivered a speech to German military commanders in Hamburg

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<sup>4</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need A Foreign Policy?*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 43-46. Also, NATO's decision making architecture is described in the *NATO Handbook*, (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, 2001), 149-150. The NAC has effective political authority and powers of decision, and consists of Permanent Representatives of all member nations meeting together at least once a week. The NAC is the only body within the Alliance that derives its authority explicitly from the North Atlantic Treaty. The MC is quite simply the military advisory branch of the NAC. Military decision making within NATO is illustrated by the following example: During ALLIED FORCE in 1999, SACEUR was required to forward recommendations on such things as specific targeting through the MC for oversight and the NAC for approval. Each Representative to the NAC has veto authority and can rule against, in this example, a target nominated by SACEUR.

criticizing Germany, spend more money on defense.<sup>5</sup> Lastly, CINCNORTH importantly linked the issue of transformation of the military command and control within NATO as a precondition to achieving greater parity between the United States and European members of the Alliance. "The Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) is helpful," CINCNORTH commented, "but it won't close the gap between Europe and the U.S. quickly enough, especially if we have to contend with rapid enlargement. We have to maintain military capability. We have to look at the command and control structure within NATO in order to help offset and absorb the shock of further enlargement."

Despite the rhetoric emanating from Washington and European capitols, the real issue is how to make NATO a more relevant, responsive and capable military organization in the future? Some would argue that no matter how much NATO transforms and/or enlarges itself, it will still be a victim of political consensus making which may or may not correlate with sound military strategy. As Henry Kissinger states, "the ambiguous priorities of NATO reflect the disappearance of the immediate threat. As a result, it has become increasingly safe in all NATO countries to give priority to domestic politics over foreign and security policy."<sup>6</sup>

NATO has attempted to make itself more relevant since the end of the Cold War by expanding its roles to include Non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations which was first promulgated in the new strategic concept approved at the Washington Summit in 1999.<sup>7</sup> The new strategic concept is based on the understanding and definition of the broader security interests of the Alliance taking into account the diversity of new risks and challenges.<sup>8</sup> In sum, NATO's strategic concept emphasized the shift in balance from deterrence and defense to crisis response beyond NATO's boundaries. The strategic concept, given events in Kosovo during 1999,

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<sup>5</sup> Ted Galen Carpenter, "NATO's New Strategic Concept: Coherent Blueprint or Conceptual Muddle?," *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001), 19.

<sup>6</sup> Kissinger, 45.

<sup>7</sup> *The NATO Handbook*, (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, 2001), 43.

<sup>8</sup> "The Alliance's Strategic Concept," *NAC Press Release (99) 65, 24 April 99* (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, 1999). Also located at <http://nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>

increased NATO's relevancy by expanding its roles and missions to cover the possibility that some crises may not fall within pure Article 5 confines and may occur out-of-area.<sup>9</sup>

A significant lesson from the Balkans is that crisis response and out-of-area operations require mobility and flexibility. NATO is improving its ability to provide greater responsiveness partially through the establishment of Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) concept. To facilitate peacekeeping and peacemaking, NATO created the CJTF concept in late 1994.<sup>10</sup> The CJTF will provide NATO with a trained and ready core of personnel able to respond quickly to crises internal, adjacent, or external (out-of-area) to the Alliance. The original concept formulated in the mid-90's was that two of the three CJTFs will be land-based within ACE and the third will be a sea-based fully deployable CJTF assigned to Striking Fleet Atlantic under Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT). The concept has matured in the last year largely because of the inability of nations to provide enough personnel to man three CJTFs and also provide personnel to meet the real world on-going commitments in the Balkans. As a result, the concept has shifted to one fully deployable CJTF able to meet external crises, one static CJTF which would be retained at one of NATO's Regional Commands, and one sea based CJTF. The manpower savings would come from the static CJTF whose personnel are organic to the Regional Command's Headquarters.<sup>11</sup> Although still several years from full implementation, the CJTF will give the Alliance a greater ability to respond to non-Article 5 crises both inside and outside of NATO's borders.

Improving NATO's military capability particularly from its European members and closing the gap with the United States will take generations if we look at achieving parity only through

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<sup>9</sup> Article 5 of the *Washington Treaty*: "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area..."

<sup>10</sup> Richard Rupp, "NATO 1949 and NATO 2000: From Collective Defense Toward Collective Security," *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001), 163.

<sup>11</sup> Author's own notes from briefing sessions with CINCNORTH dated throughout 2000-2001.

“hardware centric” approaches like the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI). As CINCNORTH suggested, NATO can achieve greater military capability by transforming some of the existing military command and control structures in order to eliminate duplication, increase flexibility, and provide personnel where they are actually required. Much attention is being paid to the enlargement debate given the Prague Summit is less than a year away and will decide future accessions into NATO. The issues are ambiguous and complex when it comes to NATO but a basic question emerges. Given the lack of an overriding external threat that was evident during the Cold War, how does NATO transform itself to meet the rapidly changing security environment? Both the Clinton and current Bush administration have maintained the importance of maintaining the Alliance and in enlarging it in order to address such threats as out-of-area crises like the Balkans, terrorism, proliferation of Weapons of Mass Effects (WME), international crime, mass migration, as well as provide collective defense.<sup>12</sup> The idea is to enlarge the Alliance in order to shape the strategic environment and thereby increase NATO’s relevancy. Most of what is written on the subject of NATO enlargement is favorable. Much of the criticism of enlargement is limited primarily to the Russian issue. However, very little is written on the subject that CINCNORTH touched on and that is the effect of enlargement on NATO’s military capability. There is little discussion on whether or not the current military command and control structures within NATO can reasonably absorb the shock of at least seven more nations added to the roster without consideration given to the possible adverse effects these future accessions will have on the military capability of NATO.

Consequently, the focus of this paper will be to explore the concept of structural transformation to the military command and control at the strategic level in NATO as a necessary corollary to enlargement in order to improve military capability. The evidence and analysis will focus primarily on the strategic command at Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT)

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<sup>12</sup> Stephen J. Blank, *The Transatlantic Security Agenda: A Conference Report and Analysis*, Strategic Studies Institute, (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2001), 24-32.

based largely on interviews with its commander and deputy commander. As part of the analysis, the author will posit alternative approaches to transforming the strategic command level in NATO. The first approach is to simply dissolve SACLANT leaving its role and missions to a single strategic command—Allied Command Europe (ACE). The second option is to create a third strategic command with responsibility for exclusively out of area operations and power projection. The third approach is to make SACLANT a purely functional operational command responsible for concept development and experimentation (CDE) within NATO and providing capabilities enhancement for the aspiring nations to NATO.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **FRAMING THE DEBATE**

Before looking at the issue of NATO military command and control transformation by focusing on alternative C2 approaches for SACLANT, it is necessary to establish some contextual background that will hopefully enhance the overall understanding of the relationship between transformation and enlargement within NATO and its impact on military capability. Specifically, how has NATO transformed and enlarged in the past? Several examples of NATO transformation are used from both the Cold War and post-Cold War periods in order to illustrate the ability of Alliance to respond to changes in the strategic environment. NATO transformed during the Cold War to meet the external threat of Soviet expansion. The monolithic Soviet threat helped define and to a large extent organize NATO for forty plus years. Since the end of the Cold War, the monolithic threat to NATO no longer exists. As a result, NATO has had to transform both its strategy and its command and control structures to meet a spectrum of new challenges.

## Cold War Transformation (1949-1989)

When the Alliance was formed in 1949, its unifying element was a common policy of containment and deterrence towards the Soviet Union. The North Atlantic Treaty, also known as the Washington Treaty was clearly designed to counter Soviet expansion and military power. "But the treaty itself identified no enemy, protected the sovereign decision making rights of all members, and was written in sufficiently flexible language to facilitate adjustments to accommodate changing international circumstances."<sup>13</sup> In essence, the Washington Treaty reaffirms the inherent right of states to individual or collective defense. Therefore the most prominent feature of the Treaty is the Article 5 provision which is an agreement among all parties that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.<sup>14</sup>

During the Cold War, NATO's strategy and the way in which the United States deployed forces in Europe gave Article 5 even more meaning. In the 1950's, the U.S. threatened massive retaliation against the Soviet Union if it attacked any NATO country. After massive retaliation's credibility was undermined by the development of operational concepts for employing theater nuclear weapons, NATO adopted a strategy of "flexible response" which implied that NATO would offset the Soviet's conventional numerical superiority on the battlefield with tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>15</sup> The original 12 member nations of NATO, therefore, established a military command and control structure predicated first and foremost on nuclear deterrence and the containment of the Soviet Union.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Stanley R. Sloan and J. Michelle Forrest, "NATO's Evolving Role and Missions," *NATO's Roles, Missions and Future* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2000), 14.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Rupp, "NATO 1949 and NATO 2000: From Collective Defense toward Collective Security," *NATO Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (Washington D.C., CATO Institute, 2001), 160.

<sup>15</sup> Richard L. Kugler, *Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War* (Santa Monica: RAND 1994), 189-193.

<sup>16</sup> William Park, *Defending the West: A History of NATO*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 63-73.

In these formative years of NATO, transformation generally meant simply the establishment of military command and control structures in an effort to "militarize" the Alliance. In the 1950's, following the U.S. strategic guidance contained primarily in NSC-114, an effort was launched to transform NATO from primarily a political organization by establishing a major NATO military buildup to include increased U.S. troop strength in Europe, a combined force under an American supreme commander, and the development of a fully integrated civilian and military staff structure.<sup>17</sup> For example, U.S. troop strength increased from 145,000 to 346,000 and General Eisenhower, recalled to active duty, became the first Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).<sup>18</sup> Additionally, Allied Command Atlantic (ACLANT) and Allied Commander-in-Chief Channel (CINCHAN) military commands were added to guide NATO's naval operations.<sup>19</sup>

However, prior to integration, NATO's theater defenses were divided into separate northern, central, and southern regions. These theater commands were not linked operationally to the extent of executing coordinated and synchronized operations, nor were the naval commands tied into the land-based theater commands. The transformation from largely autonomous theater and naval commands to an integrated one organized under a single Allied Command that linked various regional as well as naval strategies improved the ability of NATO to respond militarily to a crisis.

Transformation of the military C2 in the 1950's into a fully integrated one complemented both the nuclear and conventional strategies as well. Combining the elements of the nuclear triad under the command and control of SACEUR assured maximum centralization of those vital assets and enhanced NATO's credibility when dealing with the Soviets.<sup>20</sup> Provided adequate

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 59.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 59.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>20</sup> William Park, *Defending the West: A History of NATO*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 23-32.

forces were fielded, transformation to an integrated military command and control structure improved the overall military capability of NATO

The dominant themes of deterrence and containment of the Soviet threat continued to influence the political and military posture of NATO for the next three decades during the Cold War. Much of the transformation that occurred during those 30 years revolved mainly around the relative force strengths each nation contributed in an effort to provide senior political and military leadership within the Alliance with more options at the conventional level before escalating to nuclear weapons. For example, greater emphasis was being applied to increase the agility and striking capability of the Alliance by increasing the number of fighter wings in Europe to offset the conventional land mismatch with the Soviets.<sup>21</sup> Clearly, the Soviet Union was quantitatively superior to Alliance forces, yet it was the qualitative advantage the Alliance maintained over a sustained period of time, led largely by the United States, that in the end proved to be the deciding factor.

In sum, during the Cold War, the presence of a clear external threat to the Alliance made deterrence and containment of the Soviet Union the primary mission of NATO. The strategy was simple. Nuclear weapons would be used by NATO against the Soviet Union if it was attacked. As NATO adopted a fully integrated command structure, increased force levels, and developed tactical nuclear weapons, greater flexibility was incorporated into strategy development. The Soviets would be contained through various levels of escalation by NATO up to and including a massive nuclear response.

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<sup>21</sup> By 1960, NATO in-place forces and outside reinforcements were outnumbered by the Warsaw Pact by 3:1 vice 5:1 in 1949. In 1949, most of NATO's ground forces were located near the Rhine. By 1960, NATO's forces had moved well forward along the Hamburg-Hanover urban axis within 50km of the inter-German border. By 1980, the issue of maintaining nuclear parity and expenditures associated with the development and deployment of Pershing II/GLCM to match the Soviet's SS-20 capability impacted the conventional force within the Alliance. The Warsaw Pact enjoyed a 2:1 numerical advantage on the ground while approaching parity in the air. However, by 1989, it was clear that NATO's strategy of maintaining a balance between security and economic health proved to be superior to the one-sided security at all costs strategy of the Kremlin. In the end, the Soviets could no longer economically sustain their security strategy. Something had to give.



## Post-Cold War Transformation (1989-present)

With the demise of the Soviet Union, there was a series of political decisions within NATO beginning with London in 1990 and culminating in Brussels in 1994 attempting to downplay warfighting and emphasizing peacekeeping and peace enforcement instead.<sup>22</sup> Thomas S. Szayna, a scholar on European relations at RAND, describes NATO's transformation following the Cold War:

NATO's current role is illustrated by its involvement in the Former Yugoslavia since 1993, which has emphasized peace enforcement while retaining, in a residual form, the traditional mission of deterring potential military threats to NATO members. In short, to remain relevant and continue to play a role in shaping European security, NATO reinvented itself in the 1990s as an institution for perceived security problems in contemporary Europe.<sup>23</sup>

The road-map for *reinvention* was paved in 1991 when NATO issued its Strategic Concept for the Alliance, suggested by many as the most significant transformation of NATO's strategy since flexible response in the 1960's. The 1991 Strategic Concept postured NATO to meet the changes in the security environment in the post-Cold War era. Specifically, it guided NATO as it absorbed a unified Germany, dealt with large force reductions, partially overhauled its command and control structures, while addressing the Balkan's conflict.<sup>24</sup> Essentially, the Alliance recognized that Article 5 remained the *raison d'être* of NATO, but added crisis management and conflict prevention as critical missions in response to the changes in the strategic landscape. What this meant in terms of forces and the associated command and control was a movement from large-scale static forces to smaller deployable units able to mobilize quickly.

In accordance with the Strategic Concept of 1991, forces were divided into reaction, main defense, and augmentation units. Additionally, the concept of multinationality was incorporated throughout the revised force structure to promote cohesion, reinforce transatlantic links, and

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<sup>22</sup> Thomas S Szayna, *NATO Enlargement 2000-2015* (Santa Monica: RAND 2001), 10.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 11.

<sup>24</sup> William T. Johnsen, *NATO Strategy in the 1990s: Reaping the Peace Dividend or the Whirlwind?* (Carlisle, U.S. Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 1995), 1.

demonstrate Alliance solidarity and commitment to collective defense. The military command and control structure was transformed at all levels of war to accommodate the strategic concept. At the strategic command level, Immediate Reaction Forces (IRF) and Rapid Reaction Forces (RRF) were formally aligned under both ACE and SACLANT. Immediate reaction forces include the ACE Mobile Force (AMF) land and air, naval, as the Standing Allied Naval Forces Atlantic under SACLANT. Land rapid reaction forces were organized under ACE as the ACE Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). Both the IRF and RRF structures are under the strategic level of command within NATO. The logic behind this was to create a highly responsive force able to meet crises not only within NATO's boundaries but also beyond. Consequently, the reaction forces were not assigned to an operational level command within NATO. However, the strategic level commander can give operational control (OPCON) of the rapid reaction forces to an operational command if required.<sup>25</sup>

#### NATO Command Structure

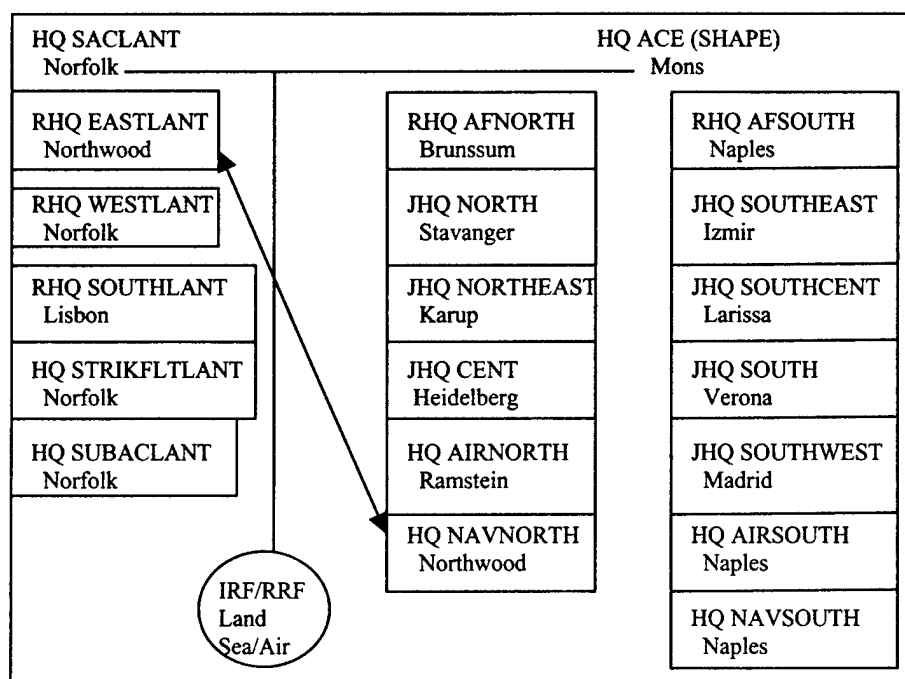


Figure 1<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept," *NATO Press Communiqué S-1(91)85* (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, November 7, 1991), paragraph 54.

<sup>26</sup> *The NATO Handbook*, (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, 1998), 257.

The latest round of transformation of NATO's military command and control occurred as a result of the 1999 Strategic Concept for NATO. The 1999 Strategic Concept, like 1991, further emphasized a shift in balance from collective defense to crisis response beyond NATO's boundaries. It highlighted the importance of the transatlantic link between the U.S. and Europe, and also recognized the importance of developing a European identity within the Alliance in order to maintain a balance between Europe and the U.S. in sharing risks and responsibilities. The primary missions of NATO following the 1999 Strategic Concept are: Article 5 Collective Defense; Non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations; and, Consultation and Cooperation.<sup>27</sup> In parallel with the revised strategic concept, NATO has also transformed its command structure to meet the requirements of a much broader mission spectrum—from humanitarian assistance to high intensity warfare. Greater emphasis has been placed on operations at the regional level. For example, in early 2000, AFSOUTH was given operational control of the headquarters and forces in the Balkans. Previously, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) was directly controlled by SACEUR and SHAPE at the strategic level effectively circumventing the operational command in Naples.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, the strategic concept afforded a much greater level of flexibility with respect to command and control relationships regarding boundaries, coordination lines and phasing. For example, in ACE, only those command and control measures necessary for the conduct of strategic peacetime operations need to be permanently established. The requirement for permanently established boundaries below regional level in ACE was thus eliminated and under the new structure there are no permanently activated Joint Sub-Regional Command (JSRC) Joint Operations Areas.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "The Alliance's Strategic Concept," *NAC Press Release (99) 65*, 24 April 99. Also located at <http://nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>

<sup>28</sup> Author's hand-notes from numerous meetings in 1999-2000 with CINCNORTH, CINCSOUTH and SACEUR.

<sup>29</sup> *NATO Handbook*, (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, 1998), 268.

In sum, NATO's new C2 structurally transformed at all levels of war to meet the changing security environment. At the strategic level, ACE was created to defend Western Europe against Warsaw Pact forces. Today, ACE is focusing on crisis response and enhancing stability through accession and the Partnership-for-Peace (PfP) program. SACLANT in the past was created to support the defense of Western Europe by insuring the sea lines of communication (SLOCs) would remain open. Today, as the next chapter will indicate, SACLANT is focusing far less on blue water and spending much more time leading the Alliance in future concepts/development and joint experimentation.

The background of NATO's military transformation to include significant adaptation of command and control to the changing security environment indicates that despite disparate political agendas and the limitations of consensus decision making, the Alliance has responded and remained relevant for over 50 years.

## **Strategy of Enlargement**

Enlargement within NATO is largely a political strategy with the aim of shaping the security environment by promoting democratization and stability in previously non-democratic and/or not so stable states. As a recent RAND report stated:

Just as NATO has adopted many collective security elements in order to deter conflicts in areas on its periphery, so too has it set on a course of enlargement in order to institutionalize democratic and market reforms in the unintegrated areas of central, eastern, and southern Europe and thereby increase overall security. Enlargement is thus best seen analytically in terms of its intended role in shaping the security environment in Europe.<sup>30</sup>

In 1949 as now, NATO and its subsequent enlargements (Germany in 1955, Spain in 1982) provided a security context within which Europe's internal questions of political stability and economic growth could be addressed without imposing any conditions on prospective members. However, what is different with the most recent round of accessions (Madrid 1998) when Poland,

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<sup>30</sup> Thomas S. Szayna, *NATO Enlargement 2000-2015*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), 15.

Hungary, and the Czech Republic were admitted into NATO, is the fact that there were significant pre-conditions for entrance into the Alliance. NATO focused on collective defense during the Cold War enlargements so the politics took a secondary role behind military capability. Today, the equation is reversed so that as long as a prospective member has established a modicum of democratic reforms and some minor military reforms listed in the Membership Action Plan (MAP), they can theoretically gain NATO membership.

The MAP is designed to assist those countries that wish to join the Alliance in their preparations by providing advice, assistance and practical support on all aspects of NATO membership.<sup>31</sup> Basically, the MAP helps countries aspiring to NATO membership focus their preparations. Some of the reforms required by the MAP are hardware and infrastructure related, and some are organizational in nature. For example, Slovakia was required by the MAP in 1999 to co-locate its military general staff with the Ministry of Defense.<sup>32</sup> The nine nations that have declared an interest in joining NATO and are currently participating in the MAP are Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.<sup>33</sup> In theory, therefore, enlargement should only include those nations that have met all their MAP criteria. Yet to date, not one of the nine prospective nations has met their MAP criteria.<sup>34</sup>

In most cases, prospective nations simply cannot finance reform themselves without direct monetary and military technical assistance from NATO. Consequently, in the winter of 2000, the Bulgarian Permanent Representative to NATO Ambassador Boyko Noev was visiting CINCNORTH and offered a possible solution to the MAP problem. Ambassador Noev candidly

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<sup>31</sup> *The NATO Handbook*, (Brussels: Office of Information Press, 2001), 65.

<sup>32</sup> Author's hand-notes, meeting between President Rudolf Schuster of Slovakia and CINCNORTH on 21 April 2000, Zvolen, Slovakia.

<sup>33</sup> *The NATO Handbook*, 65.

<sup>34</sup> Aspirant countries are expected to achieve certain goals in the political and economic fields. These include settling any international, ethnic or external territorial disputes by peaceful means; demonstrating a commitment to the rule of law and human rights; establishing democratic control of their armed forces; and promoting stability and well-being through economic liberty, social justice and environmental responsibility.

told the CINC that Bulgaria could not meet the minimum requirements for military reform set out in the MAP, and that most of the other candidate nations are in the same boat. He suggested that NATO admit all nine candidate nations in 2002 with the stipulation that over time, these nations would meet the minimum military standards outlined in the MAP.<sup>35</sup>

The strategy of enlargement, therefore, while politically appealing has both direct and indirect costs associated with it. The direct costs are those alluded to above. For example, NATO must fund infrastructure repairs and construction to airfields in order to bring them into compliance. Bulgaria currently has five airfields under construction. Nearly 80 percent of the cost is borne by NATO.<sup>36</sup> Within the U.S. Congress, the cost to NATO for the accessions in 1998 has been estimated anywhere from \$1.5 to \$150 billion.<sup>37</sup>

Indirect costs are those which are difficult to put a price tag on but are perhaps more important than direct costs. These are the costs to military capability within NATO collectively and were the subject of concern for CINCNORTH. The concern is as more nations are admitted into NATO it will mean that more money is siphoned off of NATO's already limited budget in order to bring new nations' forces up to a minimum standard so they can be interoperable and effective. Additionally, since nations contribute a share of their defense budgets to NATO, there will be less money in their own budgets to spend on such things as DCI. The net result, therefore, is establishing a negative trend for NATO's military capability as a whole. CINCNORTH termed this trend as "diluting" the Alliance, or establishing the conditions for a hollow force. For comparative purposes, the defense budgets of the nine prospective nations slated for accession in 2002 are listed below:

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<sup>35</sup> Author's hand-notes, meeting between CINCNORTH and Bulgarian PERMREP at Headquarters Allied Forces North Europe, Brunssum, The Netherlands, 18 Feb 2001.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

### Defense Information for Prospective NATO Nations

Country	Pop. (mil)	Number of Act Troops	1998 Defense Expend(mil)	1999 Defense Expend(mil)	1999 Defense as % GDP	
Bulgaria	8.3	101,500	\$220	\$240	x	
Estonia	1.5	3,300	\$38	\$59	1.2%	
Latvia	2.6	4,500	\$37	\$40	0.73%	
Lithuania	3.7	5,200	\$120	\$125	1.7%	
Romania	22.8	200,000	\$800	\$820	2.2%	
Slovenia	2.0	10,000	\$424	\$438	1.8%	
FYROM	2.3	11,000	\$125	\$128	x	
Albania	3.6	51,000	\$55	x	x	
Slovakia	5.4	47,000	\$485	\$425	1.7%	

Figure 1<sup>38</sup>

At first glance it appears that most of the prospective nations are spending, as a percentage of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a similar amount for defense as the U.S. does, or the United Kingdom—approximately 2.9 and 2.2 percent of GDP respectively. However, what this table does not show is the relative level of modernization of the respective nations' armed forces. One way of determining a relative level of modernization is to develop a matrix using peacetime active forces as a measure of size, and per-troop annual expenditures as a measure of technological sophistication.<sup>39</sup> The threshold for differentiating between a large and small force is based on a country's potential contribution to NATO power projection missions. The large force standard for NATO is a brigade-size force with full support and rotation personnel which puts the total number near 25,000. The figure of 25,000 approximates Denmark's peacetime force. Any force below that mark is considered "small." To assess modernization, the minimum level of per-troop expenditure in NATO is equivalent to what Poland spends annually as the lowest amount of defense expenditure per-troop or \$14,469.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Jonathan P. Robell and Stanley R. Sloan, "NATO: United State Senate Views on Accessions," *NATO's Roles, Missions, and Future* (New York: Nova Science Publisher's Inc., 1999), 100.

<sup>38</sup> Christopher Bell, "NATO Enlargement: Military Capabilities and Modernization Plans," *NATO's Role, Missions and Future* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 1999), 35.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas S. Szayna, *NATO Enlargement 2000-2015*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), 89-90.

### Modernization and Size Matrix

Size	More Modern Force (greater than \$20,000 per-troop)	Less Modern Force (less than \$7,235 per-troop)
<b>Large Force</b> (More than 37,000)		Albania Bulgaria Romania Slovakia
<b>Small Force</b> (12,500 or less)	Estonia Slovenia	Latvia Lithuania Macedonia

Figure 2<sup>41</sup>

What the RAND study conducted in 2001 suggests is that, all things being equal, NATO, from a purely military perspective, is most interested in countries that contribute large and modern forces.

When Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary joined NATO in 1999 they were in the large and more modern category, compared to then NATO floor levels (Turkey). No MAP country is currently in that category, as the figure (above) shows. The MAP countries' forces are either small in size or less modern or both. Several countries (Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania) are in the least attractive category of being very low on the modernization scale and very high on the size scale. For comparison purposes, EU members currently not in NATO (with the exception of Ireland) all fall into the category of more modern and large.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, Figure 2 also shows that in addition to the relative costs associated with modernization for prospective members there are several other variables that should be considered when determining military capability. First, the forces themselves from the new members have to be integrated into NATO's command and control to achieve minimum levels of interoperability. Connectivity and communication facilities must be established as well as personnel trained to operate new equipment. Although, MAP is chartered with familiarizing NATO's command and control with partner nations (within the PfP construct), there still exists a

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 89.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 90.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 90.



large *conceptual gap* between most former Warsaw Pact command and control doctrine/procedures and NATOs'. Secondly, just a glance at the list of prospective members above will indicate to the reader that many thousands of kilometers of area to include air and sea will be added to the NATO regional commands area of responsibility with the stroke of a pen. By default, less modern forces will be charged with not only defending their own borders, but those of adjacent and potentially out-of-area borders. Lastly, enlargement expands the already large capability gap and delays efforts such as DCI in closing the gap between Europe and the United States. For example, interoperability in such areas as combat identification is problematic at best with the long-term members of NATO. It becomes magnified when many of the new nations are driving or flying equipment that many of NATO's former enemies possessed.

Consequently, it is argued that enlargement, although promoting democracy and stability on the political front in the long run, decreases NATO's overall military capability in the short term. Forecasts for enlargement from 2002-2010 range from a slow pace to a stepped up pace of two to three rounds of enlargement, each involving more than one new member.<sup>43</sup> CINCNORTH underscored the importance of taking it very slow to Senator Biden. The CINC stated that "European nations will not increase defense budgets, so the capability gap will grow between the U.S. and Europe. Therefore, admitting more nations to NATO now will degrade the military capability of NATO for generations."<sup>44</sup> The slow pace will allow for the new member to improve its forces and hardware, integrate into NATO's command and control, and also allow prospective nations more time to make improvements as well. Time is important because it will also allow the current military infrastructure within NATO to fold new nations into existing or new plans, and make the necessary force structure adjustments. Conversely, as CINCNORTH alluded to, allowing all nine prospective nations in NATO at one time could have significant long-term

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>44</sup> Meeting between Senator Joseph Biden (D-Del) and General Joachim Spiering (CINCNORTH) in Senator Biden's office located in the Hart Building, Washington D.C., 19 Sept 00.

effects on the military capability of the Alliance.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, simply slowing the pace of enlargement is one way to assist in closing the capability gap.

However, another option is to link transformation with the concept of enlargement over time. Simply delaying the process of enlargement alone won't sufficiently address the multifaceted security challenges that the Alliance will face over the next years. A major assumption of the delayed entry approach is that the security environment will remain status quo for the next decade or longer. If there is no change, then simply delaying the accession of new members is a viable approach. But, as the lack in progress in DCI and the recent shift toward fighting global terrorism indicate, more needs to be done sooner to increase the military capability of the Alliance. In order to successfully address the global war on terrorism over a sustained period of time, the European members of NATO should attempt to add some of their unique capabilities to those of the United States (e.g., Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO), mind-sweeping, counter-proliferation, peace enforcement, etc). If European NATO is preoccupied with enlargement and the costs associated with it, then arguably less focus will be spent on counter-terrorism. The twin priorities of enlargement and lending support to the war on terrorism will require a significant military contribution from NATO. Neither goal can be adequately addressed for the long-term without transformation. Fitting the unique challenges of the current security environment into military command and control structures built around the Soviet threat will not suffice. Since the Alliance has transformed itself in the past to meet other changes in the security environment, it is logical to link transformation with countering the adverse effects of enlargement.

In sum, transformation is but one part of the equation and cannot be analyzed in isolation without discussing enlargement of the Alliance. Transformation within NATO, particularly, military command and control, has been, as indicated above, the result primarily of changes in the security environment and is the outcome of political decision making within the Alliance. In

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<sup>45</sup> The nine nations slated for NATO accession at the 2002 Summit in Prague are: Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, Albania, Macedonia (FYROM), Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia.

most cases, transformation has improved, at least in concept, the ability of the Alliance to respond to crisis both within and outside of NATO's boundaries. As the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) and the comparatively minimal role European members played in the prosecution of ALLIED FORCE indicate, the jury is still out on whether the Alliance has sufficiently transformed to actually meet the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

NATO's missions as described in the 1999 Strategic Concept entails missions for which the armed forces of many of its current members remain unprepared, and the accession of each new member extends the NATO commitment to the collective defense of all members, even if there is no apparent threat to a new member.

At the core, NATO's current military command and control despite transformation in the 1990s is still designed for defense of allied territory under the conditions of the Cold War. It is not sufficiently structured for projecting allied power beyond allied territory, especially to territories beyond Europe's backyard. Attempts to graft new missions onto the major elements of the old command and control structure are unlikely to produce the sort of military capabilities NATO needs to address the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.<sup>46</sup> Coupled with the threat of impending enlargement, there exists today sound logic to undergo further transformation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ALLIED COMMAND ATLANTIC: COLD WAR RELIC?**

The argument addressing command and control transformation within NATO as a necessary corollary to enlargement is crystallized when analyzing SACLANT. More than any other command within NATO, SACLANT has come under close scrutiny from both politicians and

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<sup>46</sup> James A. Thomson, "A New Partnership, New NATO Military Structures," *America and Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 79.

military leadership alike in the U.S. and Europe concerned about its relevancy in the post-Cold War strategic environment. Many regard SACLANT as the quintessential Cold War relic and therefore would like to see it either dissolved or morphed into a more responsive truly joint command.

One might ask how dissolving or redefining SACLANT relates to the question of enlargement and the answer is several-fold. First, in terms of resources, SACLANT's direct cost to NATO is over \$65 million which represents nearly 16 percent of NATO's annual budget. On the manpower side, SACLANT headquarters located in Norfolk, Virginia has nearly 600 personnel on the headquarters' staff alone. Second, SACLANT is distinctly non-joint. Of its 1,500 total personnel spread throughout the command less than 8 percent are *not* navy.<sup>47</sup> Each one of its operational and component level commands are naval commands. Third, SACLANT has not been engaged in any operation other than in a supporting role in relatively indirect ways since its inception other than serving as the "parent" strategic command for the sea-based CJTF located aboard the *USS Mount Whitney*.<sup>48</sup> Finally, a corollary to the third point is the fact that SACLANT has moved away from its original charter to become for all intents and purposes, a future concept/experimentation center for Allied Command Europe.

### **SACLANT: The Organizing Principle**

NATO created SACLANT as a result of the Ministerial Committee (MC) guidance contained within NATO Strategy MC 14/1 in 1952. The driving factors in formulating MC 14/1 were the events on the Korean peninsula and to counter-balance the Soviet threat to Western Europe.<sup>49</sup> The concept was to deter as well as contain the Soviet threat specifically and to quell the spread of communism. Dr. Richard Kugler, a NATO expert at RAND, described MC 14/1 as

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<sup>47</sup> "SACLANT Command Presentation," (Norfolk: HQ SACLANT, Sept 2001), 8-11.

<sup>48</sup> SACLANT's sea-based CJTF has not been deployed operationally. Full Operational Capability (FOC) is expected in 2005.

<sup>49</sup> Richard L. Kugler, *NATO Military Strategy for the Post-Cold War Era*, (Santa Monica: RAND 1992), 17.

“representing a combination of American and West European thinking, MC 14/1 postulated a strategy that relied heavily on strategic nuclear weapons, but it also incorporated ambitious goals for NATO’s conventional defenses.”<sup>50</sup> Underpinning this strategy was strict U.S. command and control of nuclear weapons manifested in the requirement for both ACE and ACLANT being led by a U.S. four-star.

The specific threat and the impetus behind subsequent force planning was directed toward the mainland of Europe—the central front and its flanks. Facing a Soviet ground threat, according to General Omar Bradley, of approximately 175 active divisions and the ability to call-up another 300 on short-notice, the weight of effort in terms of funding and force structure was focused on ACE and ground forces of the Alliance.<sup>51</sup> To offset the conventional force disparity between the Soviets and NATO, the U.S. successfully leveraged a Tactical Nuclear Weapon (TNW) counter strategy within NATO. As a result, NATO military leadership in the early 1950’s were not overly concerned about the threat posed by Soviet naval forces. Unlike their ground counterparts, the Soviet navy was small, unsophisticated, and, at best, only capable of defensive action in home waters. By contrast, the combined naval forces of the NATO alliance were comparatively overwhelming. This relative naval superiority was the foundation for a strictly defensive naval concept. Maritime military strategy and force planning was based on the capability to protect sea lines of communications to the Atlantic link and defending NATO flanks from the sea.

By the mid-1960’s, with the U.S. heavily committed in Vietnam, the Soviets were rapidly building the largest submarine force in the world and a modern blue water navy. NATO made the assumption that the dramatic build-up in Soviet naval forces had the mission of dividing and destroying the Atlantic transatlantic link and the logistical lines of communication of NATO.

After significant advances in submarine technology, to include nuclear propulsion and equipping submarines with submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), and unconstrained

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<sup>50</sup> Richard L. Kugler, *Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War* (Santa Monica: RAND 1994), 60.

defense spending throughout the 1980's, the Soviet navy reached parity with the Alliance. By 1984, the Soviets based over half of their maritime forces adjacent to the northeastern Atlantic, either at Kola bases near Northern Norway or in the Baltic Sea with the primary mission of targeting against northern Atlantic NATO forces. Control of the northern Atlantic and the Norwegian Sea would become a necessary precursor for success in all other European theaters. The Soviet Union could now contest NATO's control over the Northern flanks to Europe.

In response to this threat, SACLANT became the wedge that would drive U.S. maritime strategy into NATO. The three prongs of NATO's maritime strategy argued by Admiral Heyward, U.S. Navy Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) included deterrence, forward defense and flexible response. Naval deterrence was an extension of the United States' strategy of nuclear deterrence-massive retaliation utilizing air, sea, and ground based (ICBM) nuclear weapons.<sup>52</sup> Forward defense and early deployment of allied forces was required in order to counter a Soviet offensive. In the Atlantic, this translated into denial of Alliance sea lines of communication. Control of the Norwegian Sea and containment of the Soviet northern fleet was essential for NATO gaining and maintaining freedom of maneuver in the Atlantic. Therefore, SACLANT was charged with the responsibility of providing for the littoral defense of Norway and Iceland during the Cold War.<sup>53</sup> Norway and Iceland were essential in preventing a breakout by Soviet naval forces and defending the resupply and reinforcement routes so critical to SACEUR's land campaign. In modern joint lexicon, SACLANT was a supporting command to SACEUR. The supporting strategy of flexible response sought to bottle up and attack Soviet submarines in forward deep areas in the Barents Sea and present progressive barriers, before the Soviets had access to the Alliance's SLOCs while gaining air superiority over Norway and Iceland.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> William Park, *Defending the West: A History of NATO*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 23.

<sup>52</sup> Douglas Johnson, *NATO Realignment and the Maritime Component*, (Washington: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 1992), 1-15.

<sup>53</sup> Admiral Leon A. Edney (ret), *50 Years of the Cold War: A Maritime-SACLANT Perspective* (Norfolk: HQ SACLANT, 2000), 3. Admiral Edney served as SACLANT from 1990 to 1992.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 4.

Since the 1970's SACLANT has exercised Article 5 operations for the defense of Norway and Iceland. The training standard throughout the 1980s had been 10-14 exercises a year. Typically, a STRONG EXPRESS Article 5 exercise for the defense of Norway and Iceland consisted of 350 ships, 700 aircraft, and 65,000 men from 12 nations.<sup>55</sup> Today, SACLANT exercises similar Article 5 operations (STRONG RESOLVE) once every two years with a third of the forces.<sup>56</sup>

The *raison d'être* of SACLANT continues to be Article 5 and the defense of Norway and Iceland yet the blue water threat no longer exists. By contrast, ACE under the command of SACEUR, has significantly modified its command and control in order to meet the realities of the strategic environment. Partially driven by factors in the Balkans, the enlargement to the east, and its relationship with Russia, NATO has been forced to adapt to rapidly changing events and become more responsive. NATO has looked to ACE largely because of proximity, but also because of relevancy, to meet these challenges. The obvious question therefore is: what is the relevancy of SACLANT in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

### **SACLANT: A U.S. Perspective**

The Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS) Policy/Plans for SACLANT, a U.S. naval flag position, provided some input to this question. He agreed that SACLANT truly lacked a mission. Article 5 remains the *raison d'être* of NATO, but what is the organizing principle for SACLANT itself following the Cold War? When compared to ACE, with its involvement in the Balkans and enlargement over the past eight years, SACLANT, by virtue of its geography, has been

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>56</sup> Author's notes taken at meeting between CINCNORTH and SACEUR, 8 February 2001. CINCNORTH was the primary Office Scheduling Exercise (OSE) for STRONG RESOLVE 02 and SACLANT was Office Conducting Exercise (OCE).

marginalized to an extent by NATO political leadership.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, a central theme of SACLANT today is the concept of “articulation of the maritime case.”<sup>58</sup> The idea is to basically make a case for maritime missions regardless of a diminished threat. Recognizing a lack in institutional justification, the maritime case is summed up in a revised maritime strategy for NATO stated as:

- Rejuvenate and focus NATO’s Joint Maritime Strategy
- Better prepare NATO to equip, organize, train and project NATO’s maritime forces in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Continually review and define the relevant military capabilities required to help achieve NATO’s broad mission spectrum
- Analyze and rejuvenate Allied Maritime strategy and doctrine, and establish the conceptual foundations on which to build the joint maritime capabilities and concept of operations that will be essential to NATO in the future<sup>59</sup>

The basic idea as the ACOS suggested, is to “sell” SACLANT as a relevant command for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The quest for relevancy despite the “articulation of the maritime case” according to the U.S. ACOS is on two fronts. The first is implementing the sea based CJTF, and the second is in Concept Development and Experimentation (CDE) given SACLANT’s tidewater partnership with United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM).<sup>60</sup>

The Striking Fleet Atlantic commander, a subordinate command under SACLANT, may serve as the commander of a Multinational Maritime Force, or as the commander of a sea-based CJTF. There are a number of advantages of a sea-based CJTF headquarters to include greater

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<sup>57</sup> Interview with Rear Admiral Crocker, ACOS Policy/Plans, HQ SACLANT, and the author, Norfolk, VA, 24 Sept 2001.

<sup>58</sup> “ACLANT Themes 2000-2001,” (Norfolk: HQ SACLANT), 1.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Rear Admiral Crocker, ACOS Policy/Plans, HQ SACLANT, and the author, Norfolk, VA, 24 Sept 2001. Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic Command is dual-hatted as Commander-in Chief Joint Forces Command (previously U.S. Atlantic Command).



mobility, flexibility and sustainability. Striking Fleet Atlantic have successfully conducted large-scale combined operations in exercises utilizing the command and control capabilities of the *USS Mount Whitney*. As NATO's new strategy includes the likelihood for more out-of-area operations and access to land based headquarters may be limited or denied, the sea-based CJTF offers a realistic and flexible alternative. Additionally, the asset itself and the trained personnel aboard the *USS Mount Whitney* could be chopped operationally (OPCON) to SACEUR in a crisis and utilized in his area of responsibility if required.<sup>61</sup> In essence, the sea-based CJTF, like the ARRC, is less an argument for SACLANT *per se* and more an argument for greater flexibility and deployability of an operational capability within NATO itself.

The second argument concerning the question of relevancy for SACLANT is its close relationship with JFCOM. Joint Forces Command gained a functional mandate following the Goldwaters-Nichols Act in 1987 to lead transformation of the U.S. military joint warfighting into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Since SACLANT is also CINCUSJFCOM it provides NATO a convenient pipeline into U.S. cutting edge technology and concepts. One of the major components of the 1999 Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) was the creation of the Concept Development and Experimentation (CDE) program. In essence, CDE is a process for matching concepts and experimentation to meet national, multi-national or NATO-wide military requirements. For example, CJTF is a near-term concept with NATO-wide implications that is undergoing simulations and experimentation via CDE. Additionally, ACE and SACLANT are working together in conducting a CDE test case involving the command and control of the ACE Mobile Force Land (AMFL). Involving simulations as well as real-world deployment of a brigade size headquarters, CDE is the conduit for that process. Much of the simulation and experimentation is

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid. SACLANT ACOS Policy/Plans is describing the command relationships that are delineated in a classified NATO publication called 80-80. His comments are presented in an unclassified format.

done through JFCOM and the Joint Training and Simulation Center (JTASC) located in Suffolk, Virginia.<sup>62</sup>

Consequently, from a U.S. perspective within SACLANT, the future lies in exploiting the joint experimentation and CDE process and not necessarily in any purely operational mission area that once clearly defined SACLANT's role during the Cold War. In fact, SACLANT has transformed from a geographical strategic command into a functional and supporting one for ACE.

### **SACLANT: A European Perspective**

According to Deputy SACLANT, an Admiral in the British Royal Navy, there are three vital mission areas that underscore the relevancy of SACLANT. The first is that SACLANT is a critical component to maintaining and growing the transatlantic link between Europe and the U.S. The second is, similar to the U.S. perspective above, that SACLANT is the "forward thinking" command within NATO. Thirdly, SACLANT still maintains a vital role operationally throughout the AOR even without a peer blue water threat.<sup>63</sup>

Clearly, much political rhetoric has been dedicated toward the importance of maintaining the transatlantic link. Given the advent of ESDI and the push toward a purely European response to security and defense issues linked closely with the EU's decision in 1999 to develop a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), pundits on both sides of the Atlantic have used the ESDI and ESDP developments to support their respective arguments concerning the health of the Alliance. On the one hand, the U.S. has argued that Europe should assume more of the defense burden for crises that occur in or near Europe. Basically, this school of thought maintains the

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<sup>62</sup> "ACLANT Themes 2000-2001," (Norfolk: HQ SACLANT), 4. And, Interview with ACOS Policy/Plans, HQ SACLANT, Norfolk, VA, 24 Sept 2001.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Admiral Perowne, Deputy SACLANT, HQ SACLANT, and the author, Norfolk VA, 22 Oct 01.

U.S. ought to disengage in a sense so that Europe will be forced into accepting more of its own security and defense problems. Despite the rhetoric, DSACLANT, as a European voice within NATO, views the transatlantic link as critical to the health of the Alliance.<sup>64</sup> To the extent SACLANT, a small headquarters when compared to SACEUR/SHAPE can help foster that link through exchanges, exercises, and dialogue, the better for NATO. In the last analysis, SACLANT, the only tangible presence of NATO in the United States, is more about symbolism than capability.

The idea that SACLANT resonates within NATO as the “conceptual” headquarters is a perspective shared by both the U.S. and Europe to varying degrees. On one level, SACLANT has made important strides in CDE, CJTF, and bringing joint experimentation to the forefront because of its unique relationship with JFCOM. DSACLANT was more positive than ACOS Policy/Plans concerning progress made on other DCI related issues and in creating a Joint Maritime Strategy. SACLANT, according to DSACLANT, serves as the conduit for planning, concepts, and technology flow between North America and Europe. “We view ourselves as NATO’s bridge to the future, leading in the area of innovation as we adapt to future changes in the security environment.”<sup>65</sup> NATO has put a greater reliance on SACLANT to develop new concepts simply because ACE has been operationally engaged in the Balkans.

Interestingly, DSACLANT views SACLANT as fully engaged operationally throughout the ACLANT AOR. He cited several examples. First, Striking Fleet Atlantic as “parent” headquarters for the sea-based CJTF is the only CJTF headquarters within NATO nearly operational. Second, SACLANT still plays a major role in maintaining a maritime presence with Standing Naval Forces Atlantic (SNFL). Thirdly, he mentioned that SACLANT had OPCON of

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

NATO's Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft deployed from Germany as part of defending the United States against further terrorist attacks following 9 September 2001.<sup>66</sup>

In summary, DSACLANT was significantly more optimistic about SACLANT's future than his U.S. subordinate counterpart. Part of the reason for that is Europe has much more to lose if SACLANT is dissolved or transformed than the U.S. does. On this point it is interesting to look at a comment made by Secretary of State Dean Rusk to Secretary of Defence Robert McNamara in 1964 on the subject of the U.S. contribution to NATO:

The Secretary (McNamara) stated his concern regarding the high cost of infrastructure and the changed economic conditions both in Europe and the United States. He emphasized that our allies are not shouldering an equitable share of the overall NATO defense burden. He observed that the Europeans pay for no defense infrastructure here so he wondered why we should continue to pay for infrastructure in Europe. It was explained that the infrastructure facilities are for support of NATO forces in general, including our own. He was advised that there is a very small amount of NATO infrastructure in the United States at SACLANT headquarters in Norfolk. At this point the Secretary said he was less interested in having the Europeans share the costs here in the United States but he firmly believed that the Europeans should assume an increased share of the cost in Europe.<sup>67</sup>

One could argue little has changed in 38 years. The cost share for the U.S. to NATO in 1964 was 31 percent. In 2000, the cost share of the U.S. was 27 percent.<sup>68</sup> On the surface, DSACLANT is correct in his assessment that SACLANT is an important enabler for the Alliance particularly in the area of CDE. Yet the costs are borne almost exclusively by the U.S. For example, the *NATO Review* mentions that NATO's European members *combined* spend only 60 percent of what the U.S. does on NATO defense.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, for Europe it is in their best interest to maintain SACLANT for the long term to help defray R&D, simulation, and hardware costs. Consequently,

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid. Standing Naval Forces Atlantic consists of 5-10 destroyers/frigates from various NATO nations.

<sup>67</sup> "Secretary's Memoranda of Conversation," (Washington: Department of State: Lot 65 D 330, 18 March 1964). Also located at [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xiii/020.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xiii/020.html).

<sup>68</sup> *The NATO Handbook* (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, 1999), 209.

<sup>69</sup> "European Defense Takes a Leap Forward," *NATO Review* (Brussels: Office of Information and Press, Spring/Summer 2000), 9. Europe's total defense budget in 2001 was \$220 billion against \$370 billion from the United States.

it is not a leap of faith to suggest that SACLANT has become a hindrance to European burden sharing and has forestalled both the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) and the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI).<sup>70</sup> SACLANT has been and continues to be a conduit for Europe into U.S. joint experimentation, research and development, through its close relationship/dual-hattedness with JFCOM. On one level, technology sharing assists European members of NATO close the gap with the U.S. that was so dramatically illustrated in ALLIED FORCE. Yet, this very reliance on the U.S. to provide technology and capability to Europe through a command mechanism like SACLANT in fact dissuades Europe from aggressively pursuing such efforts like DCI and ESDI. Without this convenient pipeline into cutting edge U.S. technology and capability, Europe would have a greater interest in allocating more euros to creating real military capability themselves that would therefore help counter-balance some of the adverse effects of enlargement.

Is SACLANT a Cold War relic? And, has it transformed itself sufficiently to meet the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? While SACLANT maintains much of the armor of the Cold War it has made significant progress in the areas of concept development and CJTF underwritten largely by the U.S. However, as SACLANT stated himself during a visit to JFCOM headquarters, "our goal is to enhance capabilities, not for the U.S. to pay for European defense, nor for the European Allies to buy American. Allied nations do not need to spend more—but they do need to spend more wisely."<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 9-10.

<sup>71</sup> Author's hand-notes taken from meeting with General Kernan, SACLANT, HQ JFCOM, Norfolk VA, 24 Oct.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SACLANT TRANSFORMATION OPTIONS**

Given that future NATO enlargement is not a question of if but when, the question remains how best to transform NATO infrastructure to meet not only the expansion of NATO geographically, but also to counter-balance the effects of decreased military capability. In order to support new accessions, the budget cost sharing of current NATO members must increase to offset both the direct cost of accession itself, and the long term costs of getting the new accessions up to speed in terms of modernizing forces and supporting C2 infrastructure. As previously mentioned, one way to alleviate the impact to NATO is to delay accessions so that prospective nations can modernize as much as possible before entering NATO. Yet, if the political pressure is so great that up to seven nations gain NATO membership this year, then other cost saving measures must be found to offset the deleterious effects that a "big bang" accession would inevitably have on military capability.

One way to enhance military capability and develop the systems outlined in DCI is to significantly increase respective nation's defense expenditures and cost sharing to NATO. Since it is highly unlikely that real increases in defense budgets and cost sharing to NATO will occur, then other approaches to cost savings should be considered. One of the ways in which NATO has adapted to changes in the security environment has been to modify its strategy and its organizational structure. NATO transformation has occurred at the strategy making level and at the organizational level in order to adapt to external factors. Enlargement creates a similar imperative and requirement for adaptation at the strategy making level (e.g., relationship to Russia), and presents internal C2 challenges.

NATO created three strategic commands in the early 1950's in response to the global threat that the Soviet Union presented. These were Allied Command Europe, Allied Command Atlantic, and Channel Command. Channel Command was given specific responsibility for the

British Isles, Iceland and the English Channel. Channel Command was dissolved, or rather, subsumed into ACE in order to streamline command and control between SACLANT and SACEUR in 1993.<sup>72</sup> It was also done in recognition that the Soviet threat had disappeared following the fall of the wall. Greater emphasis was placed on a regional approach to security within NATO given the changes in the security environment. As a result, Allied Forces Northwest (AFNORTHWEST) was established as a regional command under ACE after CINCCHAN was dissolved. Recognizing further changes in the security environment in the mid-1990's, NATO elected to dissolve AFNORTHWEST and expanded the AOR of Allied Forces North Europe (AFNORTH). One of the important reasons for doing this was that personnel from AFNORTHWEST headquarters and its associated operating budget could be poured into AFNORTH in order to offset the costs to ACE in manpower and dollars from continued operations in the Balkans.<sup>73</sup> Additionally, AFNORTH was given the important responsibility of standing up a Partnership-for-Peace (PfP) headquarters staff element (PSE) co-located with CINCNORTH in Brunssum, the Netherlands. In effect, the costs to operate AFNORTHWEST were now being applied to assisting and training prospective nations to NATO.

Therefore, it is proposed that similar organizational changes could be done to SACLANT in order to help defray the costs to NATO for continued enlargement without significantly increasing risks to security. Three options are considered for the transformation of SACLANT with associated pros and cons. The first option is dissolving SACLANT completely and making ACE the single strategic command within NATO. The second approach is one articulated by James Thomson, a European policy specialist from RAND, and it suggests that a third strategic command be created in addition to SACLANT and ACE exclusively dedicated to NATO out-of-

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<sup>72</sup> *Allied Command Structures in the New NATO*, (Washington: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1997), 7-15.

<sup>73</sup> Author's personal notes from numerous meetings between CINCNORTH and SACEUR, July 1999-July 2000.

area operations. The third option, is to make SACLANT an operational level command under ACE with a purely functional supporting role; that of concept/doctrine development for ACE.

### **Transformation Option 1: Dissolving SACLANT**

The first argument for dissolving SACLANT falls along economic lines. Since individual defense budgets have decreased nearly 30% on the aggregate for NATO members over the past 10 years, it stands to reason that if a savings can be found and used to help defray the cost of enlargement it ought to be pursued if it makes operational sense. On the economic front, for example, SACLANT's budget is over \$61 million, yet the total cost to NATO for *operating* SACLANT, to include exercise and deployment costs, increases the total tab to something approaching \$80 million. To put that number in perspective, the U.S. contribution to the NATO Military Budget (NMB) in 1999 was \$250 million.<sup>74</sup>

The other part of the economic equation is the cost of enlargement. As stated previously, since many of the costs of enlargement are intangible—congressional testimony puts a range anywhere from \$1.5 to 160 billion depending , in part, on which side of the aisle the Senator is on. The estimates that are available—prepared by the U.S. government, NATO itself, and several non-governmental organizations—all made assumptions of force size and strategic posture that were all debatable in the rapidly changing European security environment.

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<sup>74</sup> Carl W. Ek, "NATO Common Funds Burden-sharing: Background and Current Issues," *NATO's Role, Missions and Future*, (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 1999), 9. NATO member states contribute to the activities of the Alliance in several ways, chief of which is through the deployment of their own armed forces. Certain commonly conducted activities, however, are paid for out of the three NATO-run budgets. These three accounts—the civil budget, the military budget, and the security investment program—are funded by individual contributions from the 19 member states. The percentages of countries' shares of the common funds are negotiated among the members, and are based upon per capita GDP, as well as other factors. As previously noted, the U.S. cost share is roughly 25-28% across all three separate accounts. The operation and maintenance budgets for headquarters and their activities, for example, comes out of the NATO Military Budget (NMB) account.



An article by Christopher Bell entitled, *NATO Enlargement: Military Capabilities and Modernization Plans of Potential Follow-on Candidates*, suggests the criteria for direct cost for enlargement ought to be defined as what is required to improve the military capability of aspiring nations in terms of national defense spending, military manpower, and weapons modernization.<sup>75</sup>

As previously argued, there are direct and indirect costs associated with enlargement which have very little to do necessarily with increasing per troop expenditures. When viewed in the light of truly getting some of these aspiring nations military capability up to speed, the costs will be astronomical. Therefore, if NATO is serious about enlargement and serious about maintaining combat capability and credibility, it must consider cutting some of the excess infrastructure. Dissolving SACLANT would help begin that process.

The other argument for dissolving SACLANT and placing its operational missions under ACE is the simple fact that there is no blue water threat in SACLANT's AOR. The littorals of Norway and Iceland are within AFNORTH's AOR and the operational responsibility of AFNORTH's naval component, Naval Forces North (NAVNORTH) located at Northwood in the United Kingdom. Strangely enough, NAVNORTH is dual-hatted under SACLANT as regional command—Regional Headquarters East Atlantic (RHQ EASTLANT). SACLANT makes the argument that this component in one command, and operational headquarters in another, is a very beneficial linkage serving to diminish any artificial and constraining boundaries between the two strategic commands.<sup>76</sup> Besides being a redundant headquarters with like missions, NAVNORTH/EASTLANT presents an operational level command and control problem. For example, in the upcoming major Article 5 exercise for both SACLANT and ACE entitled STRONG RESOLVE 02, SACLANT will retain OPCON of the sea-based CJTF within an ACE established Joint Operations Area (JOA) located deep within ACE's AOR. This runs contrary to

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<sup>75</sup> Christopher Bell, "NATO Enlargement: Military Capabilities and Modernization Plans of Potential Follow-on Candidates," *NATO's Role, Missions and Future* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 1999), 120.

<sup>76</sup> "SACLANT Command Presentation," (Norfolk, Sept 2001), 8.

doctrine and command and control procedures outlined in NATO's own C2 guidance (NATO Pub 80-80) and violates unity of command. The reason for this bastardized C2 arrangement is purely to bolster SACLANT's credibility and utility in a post-Cold War Article 5 scenario.<sup>77</sup> The fact of the matter is, ACE could more efficiently and effectively conduct SLOC and littoral defense with its naval component.

Alternatively, dissolving SACLANT would potentially impact NATO on two fronts. The first is on the purely political/symbolic front. The second is the fact that SACLANT does have a symbiotic relationship with JFCOM and serves as NATO's lead proponent for Concept Development and Experimentation (CDE).

NATO in the aftermath of ALLIED FORCE and in its current fight against terrorism (by invoking Article 5 following 9 September 2001) will probably never fight as a unified and committed 19. Rather, some nations will "elect" to remain at arms length or totally disengage and therefore what is left is a coalition of the willing. However, since European and U.S. interests and values are closely aligned, maintaining the transatlantic link is vitally important. Europe can peacekeep but cannot fight without the U.S. The credibility and capability of NATO, therefore, is clearly dependent on the transatlantic tie. Though, as previously argued, SACLANT may not have a important role operationally in post Cold War NATO, it does symbolically by being the only NATO headquarters in the U.S. It is a reminder of the importance of the transatlantic link between Europe and the U.S. Dissolving SACLANT would inevitably tarnish that symbolism.

Secondly, SACLANT does have a unique relationship with JFCOM and the associated expertise, hardware, and technology it brings to the table. If one of the major goals of enlargement is to get aspiring nations close to parity with the member nations of NATO, then

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<sup>77</sup> Author's notes taken during a meeting between CINCNORTH and SACEUR, 8 February 2001. CINCNORTH was the primary Office Scheduling Exercise (OSE) for STRONG RESOLVE 02 and SACLANT was Office Conducting Exercise (OCE).

addressing the shortfalls outlined in DCI is important. As the lead proponent of DCI for NATO, particularly in developing concepts, SACLANT has a valuable, albeit, indirect role in “conceptually” assisting the process of enlargement.

## **Transformation Option 2: Creating an Additional Strategic Command**

James Thomson in a RAND article entitled, *A New Partnership, New NATO Military Structures*, suggests that neither ACE nor SACLANT as commands are sufficiently addressing the changed security environment. Basically, his argument is that NATO is dealing with the new strategic realities by placing greater emphasis on peacekeeping missions in Europe but outside the NATO area.

The approach is clearly incremental: it is grafted onto NATO's existing NATO commands and major subcommands, which are organized to deal with threats within the Article 5 area. Moreover, the two major NATO commands are both led by American commanders. It will suffice so long as NATO is only focused on threats in Europe or its immediate vicinity, such as the Balkans or perhaps North Africa.<sup>78</sup>

Thomson, therefore, suggests a new military command structure recognizing that NATO could be called upon to do more and different mission in locations far from the home territories of its member states. He calls for the creation of a third strategic command that would be responsible for organizing forces to respond to crises and situations beyond NATO's traditional boundaries and would champion the idea of power projection capabilities. Let's look first at some of the advantages this proposal has before criticizing it.

Assuming global power projection is the future intent of NATO, the concept makes sense. NATO's current command structures, particularly SACLANT, and to a lesser extent ACE, are welded to their Cold War roots. The focus remains Article 5 collective defense operations and

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<sup>78</sup> “James A. Thomson, “A New Partnership, New NATO Military Structures,” *America and Europe: A Partnership for a New Era*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 1997), 86.

the command and control remains largely static and geographically focused on a large-scale threat to Europe. However, as Thomson points out, the realities of the Balkans demands a more flexible and mobile approach to security. In response, NATO has adopted the CJTF concept but Thomson believes that CJTF missions are “very different from projecting power to great distances—the new mission demanded by global partnership.”<sup>79</sup>

One of the problems of the CJTF concept that Thomson did not argue but supports his idea of a new strategic command, is where do you get the manpower and how long can you sustain it? NATO has had difficulty in manning the 1,000 personnel required to run the Kosovo Force (KFOR) headquarters since 1999. The CJTF concept calls for upwards of 5,000 personnel for the headquarters alone. The other problem of CJTF is sustainability. The idea of a CJTF is to provide a highly mobile, trained, and flexible method of command and control in or out of NATO area for short periods of time. Again, the Balkan lesson is instructive here. NATO is now going through its seventh headquarters transition in Kosovo since 1999. If a CJTF were deployed today out of area, it would fight and then stay for an extended period of time. Then the question becomes, does NATO have enough residual capability to deploy a CJTF and fight a large-scale Article 5, or even a non-Article 5, simultaneously? What the new command would provide is a *dedicated* approach to out-of-area operations. That would be its sole mission.

The disadvantages outweigh the advantages. First, Thomson failed to establish global power projection *is* the intent of NATO. Out-of-area does not mean global power projection. There is a huge difference between the Balkans and the Taiwan Straits. Assuming, NATO did want to intervene militarily in the Taiwan Straits, what does having another strategic level command add in terms of real military capability that either SACLANT or ACE cannot already provide? Second, Thomson links enlargement with out-of-area operations. Enlargement does not by extension mean that there will be a greater likelihood of out-of-area operations.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 89.

The central theme of enlargement is to promote and expand stability and security. The chance of more out-of-area operations, therefore, should decrease not increase. Third, and very importantly, NATO cannot afford to create another strategic command headquarters. Beyond the infrastructure costs, the manpower dedicated to such an enterprise as well as standing up commands below, would be prohibitive. Lastly, the biggest threat to NATO is likely internal. As previously argued, enlargement costs money and it dilutes military capability of the Alliance as a whole. Creating a third strategic command does very little to offset that threat. The last thing NATO needs is more flag-to-posts and headquarters. What is needed is increased combat capability not hollow headquarters.

### **Transformation Option 3: SACLANC becomes Allied Forces West (AFWEST)**

A third option for transformation of NATO's C2 in order to offset enlargement is to downgrade SACLANC from a strategic headquarters into a regional headquarters with the sole mission and responsibility for concept development and capability enhancement for NATO. Though the direct savings to NATO would be less in the short term than dissolving SACLANC (Opt 1), the costs of enlargement would be less in the long term if you had a *functional operational* command dedicated on the one hand to developing future concepts with its continued relationship with JFCOM, and a mission dedicated to and responsible for capabilities enhancement for new and aspiring nations to NATO.

What was clearly obvious to CINCNORTH in his visits to PfP nations such as Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and the Baltic States, was the simple fact that most of these nations lacked the conceptual and doctrinal where-with-all to begin the process of transforming their own defense establishments in order to become a "full-up round" when they do enter NATO. The debate largely thus far has been on the costs to NATO for enlargement because aspiring nations lack the

spending, forces, and hardware to improve the military capabilities of the Alliance. This will continue to be a challenge since many of these nations are dedicating a greater percentage of their GDP to basic social and economic programs first. Therefore, NATO should look for creative ways to assist aspiring nations improve their respective defense establishments.

One of the ways NATO has addressed this issue is through the PfP program itself. Established early in the 1990's the PfP program has been a successful, relatively low cost, way to assist potential candidates to NATO receive training in NATO terminology, participate in NATO exercises, and provide exchange opportunities. The other part of the equation is that aspiring nations themselves are required to meet certain defense related standards listed in the Membership Action Plans (MAP) designed specifically to ensure minimum defense reforms have been made so that at a very basic level, once these nations join NATO, they can at least be interoperable along command and control lines. Many of the MAP related items include making the painful transition from post Warsaw Pact operating procedures and doctrine to NATO ones. However, since much of the MAP reforms are also hardware related (e.g., interoperable communications equipment), some of the aspiring nations simply don't have the funds to invest in order to comply fully with the intent of the MAP.

As a result, there is a schism within NATO political circles and NATO military leadership on which aspiring nation is ready, when? Since the decision to admit aspiring nations is generally a positive political overture, NATO political leadership typically outpaces the military leadership concern for caution and delay. Consequently, NATO military leadership has to pick-up the pieces and face the stark reality of factors like dramatic disparities in military capabilities between NATO member states and aspiring/new accessions.

An operational command purely dedicated to improving the capabilities of existing NATO members through concept development and experimentation, while also dedicating manpower and real training hours to prospective NATO members' armed forces, would help defray the long-term costs of enlargement in terms of *military capability*.

"Downgrading" SACLANT to an operational command would not only help the enlargement issue, but it would also allow ACE to transfer most of its conceptual and doctrinal development to a command where it makes sense. ACE could then focus exclusively on current operations ongoing in Balkans and sensibly plan for future operations.

Structurally, the "new" operational command could be entitled Allied Forces West, in order to align it with the other operational commands of AFNORTH and AFSOUTH. AFWEST would be the supporting functional command as described with a maritime component co-located at Norfolk. NAVNORTH would drop the EASTLANT title and become the maritime component headquarters for ACE and would assume command of the subordinate European naval commands. SACEUR, therefore, as an American commander, would retain overall strategic command of U.S. naval forces to include importantly the nuclear assets. The command of AFWEST (CINCAFWEST) would go to the current DSACLANT, a British position. The deputy position would be a U.S. three-star. The reason for this is twofold. First, in order to make the downgrading of SACLANT palatable to Europeans, particularly, the British, command of AFWEST would go to a British four-star (DSACLANT is currently a British four-star position). Secondly, it would maintain the importance of symbolism between European and U.S. members of NATO.

Finally, the unique relationship between AFWEST and JFCOM would continue and perhaps be enhanced. Currently, SACLANT is dual-hatted and with that prescription comes dual command responsibilities. Given the importance of Homeland Defense as a major mission for CINCJFCOM, splitting time and effort between both commands does each command a potential disservice. CINCJFCOM must be fully engaged in Homeland Defense and counter-terrorism. However, since AFWEST would be co-located (actually located in the same SACLANT headquarters building as today), and Deputy CINCAFWEST would be a U.S. three-star, one could reasonably assume that the same level of access into JFCOM would continue.

A counter argument to downgrading SACLANT would be, as mentioned above, the perception, largely from Europe, that this is an attempt by the U.S. to disengage from NATO. Additionally, it could be argued that expanding SACEUR's AOR to include that of SACLANT would make the AOR so large as to make it difficult to manage. Both arguments are related. On the first point, the U.S., given this option, would actually increase its engagement posture with Europe by increasing SACEUR's responsibilities. ACE (under a U.S. four-star) would become the focal command within NATO. Not only would this initiative increase SACEUR's responsibilities, but would allow him to focus exclusively on the operational problem sets within and out of NATO's area. Consequently, it would allow AFWEST to focus mainly on creating cogent doctrine, expanding the technology envelope for NATO via joint experimentation, and, sending dedicated teams into PfP nations in order to assist in their defense reforms.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

The central theme of this paper has been reconciling the idea of NATO enlargement with that of internal transformation. The notion that NATO can enlarge without transforming either in strategy and/or in structure is dubious at best. NATO has transformed both strategy and structure in response to threats and the changing security environment throughout its 52-year history. It has been proposed that a relatively painless and less costly way of transforming structure and meeting the demands of enlargement would be to change a portion of the strategic level command and control within NATO.

Enlargement is a compelling argument. As suggested, perhaps one way to decrease the probability of conflict and terrorism is to provide a security and economic apparatus to nations where they have neither. In the absence of any security or economic apparatus in Kosovo for



example, drug cartels, human slave trade, and basic unchecked criminal behavior thrives. Places like Kosovo and Bosnia are breeding grounds for terrorism. Displaced and persecuted ethnic Albanians can launch their own brand of *jihad* against the West and probably have several Bin-Ladens in the making. Providing NATO membership to Bulgaria and Romania, eventually Albania, may reduce the breeding grounds for terrorism. Slovakia is struggling economically and militarily but will likely make the next round of accessions at the NATO Summit in a few months in Prague. Yet for Slovakia, and other prospective nations, NATO accession is typically associated with eventual entrance into EU membership. Enlargement, therefore, has provided, and will continue to provide, a relative security blanket for prospective nations enabling them to focus on making improvements to their infrastructures so that they can eventually gain EU membership. Enlargement *has been* successful in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. It has been a tangible mechanism for positively shaping the previous Warsaw Pact environment.

Therefore, the conclusion is not that enlargement is a bad thing, but rather, that enlargement at a greatly accelerated pace and large number of prospective nations vying for membership, will adversely impact the military capabilities of the Alliance as a whole. The evidence presented shows that out of the nine applicants for NATO this year, none meet the standard of a large and modern force. The direct and indirect costs associated with getting these forces to a level of parity, not to mention the time required, with the current *lowest* member's capabilities will be extraordinary. Furthermore, it has been argued that changes in the security environment demand even greater military capabilities from NATO to meet simultaneously Article 5 collective defense, non-Article 5 crisis response operations in and out-of-area, and the global war on terrorism. The question then becomes, how does NATO meet the twin challenge of enlargement and maintaining military capability to address the demands of a changing security environment?

It has been proposed that one of the answers to this question is command and control transformation within NATO. Modernization of forces within NATO is one part of the transformation equation. But forces belong to the respective nations and they must pay the bill.

As a result, modernization of forces within NATO is contingent on the willingness of each nation to increase its own internal defense budget. The general trend in NATO, however, throughout the 1990's, has been to *decrease* defense budgets. Consequently, as illustrated in Operation ALLIED FORCE in 1999, European members of NATO lagged significantly behind the U.S. in terms of military capability. The Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI) is one program designed to close the capability gap between Europe and the U.S. It has been contended, however, that Europe will fall even further behind the U.S. given the proposed next round of enlargement. The evidence suggests that enlargement will have direct and indirect costs associated with it. Even without enlargement, most of the European members of NATO will find it difficult to address the disparity in military capability when measured against the U.S.

Therefore, the author has posited that NATO command and control transformation is a viable corollary to enlargement. C2 transformation is not a substitute for nations modernizing their own forces but rather in addition to it. Streamlining and consolidating headquarters within NATO would not only save money but would also increase the effectiveness of NATO's military capability. Conversely, enlargement without transformation will dilute the Alliance. NATO is typically very good at the political piece, offering prospective nations membership, and creating headquarters. It is not very good at developing efficient and effective organizations and getting rid of headquarters. Part of the reason for this phenomena is the desire for political leverage and credibility for smaller nations within the Alliance. As a result, NATO has numerous headquarters in places like Portugal and Greece. Clearly, leverage is not simply manifested in physical headquarters and proximity within NATO. The idea that Luxembourg, for example, which contributes little money to NATO's budget, can veto SACEUR's selection of targets in Operation ALLIED FORCE is telling. NATO succeeds by consensus and a consensus decision is typically not the best or most effective *military* decision.

However, NATO has been and continues to be a viable political organization primarily *because* of consensus. Simply put, some nations within NATO would have little leverage if the

measure were taken purely along the lines of military capability. NATO is not merely a military alliance it is also a political one. The key, however, is translating political guidance from many different nations into a coherent military strategy that addresses the changing strategic environment and maximizes the efficient use of nation's defense budget. One of the ways to do that, as argued in this paper, is to transform NATO's C2 structure in order to focus resources and force structure to meet future threats.

On the surface, all of the NATO C2 transformation options presented have advantages and disadvantages. A common assumption in formulating all three options has been the changed nature of the threat. Clearly, NATO has successfully met the challenges of the Cold War, but the future portends a different paradigm than that of a predictable monolithic threat. The external threat to NATO has not gone away but has certainly changed. Therefore, NATO must structure itself to be more flexible and responsive in out-of-area locations. One way to do that, it has been argued, is to consolidate operational functions in ACE and concept/experimentation into AFWEST. This functional architecture will allow ACE to focus purely on warfighting and engagement aspects like most other combatant commands while allowing AFWEST to concentrate on supporting ACE through concept/doctrine development and joint experimentation through its unique relationship with JFCOM.

One option that was not discussed, was maintaining the status quo. The reason for not addressing the idea of status quo was that it undercuts the basic premise that transformation needs to take place in order to continue and counter the effects enlargement. The risk to NATO for maintaining the status quo remains greater than the risk of transforming an organization in order to make it more responsive and flexible in order to meet the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And what will those challenges be?

Conventional wisdom in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 attacks on the Trade Center Towers and the Pentagon suggests the world has indeed changed for both good and bad. The good news is that nations are drawn together as never before in a fight against terrorism. The bad

news is terrorism. For NATO, it was the first time Article 5 collective defense had been invoked in its history. But what does Article 5 mean in the context of a global war against terrorism?

What it may mean on the one hand is that NATO and the world are unified in a common cause like never before. Yet, on the other hand, it clearly shows how helpless NATO is without U.S. leadership and technology. With the notable exception of such countries as Britain, Germany, and a few others, NATO is a paper military tiger in a war against terrorism that highlights the tremendous disparity in capability within the Alliance. NATO must begin now the process of transformation to meet the demands of enlargement, attain a level of parity with the U.S., and meet the significant changes in the security environment. Transforming the command and control apparatus is one way to start.

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